

Testimony of the
Connecticut State Society of Anesthesiologists
before the
Insurance and Real Estate Committee
on
Proposed Senate Bill 74
"An Act Concerning a Prohibition Against Site
of Service Differential Payment Rates"

February 10, 2009

Mister Chairmen. Members of the Committee. My name is Thomas Halaszynski, M.D. I am a Board Certified Anesthesiologist, President of the Connecticut State Society of Anesthesiologists and a practicing physician at Yale-New Haven Hospital in New Haven, CT. I am submitting testimony today in support of Proposed Senate Bill 74, "An Act Concerning a Prohibition Against Site of Service Differential Rates."

In medicine today, we are confronting a difficult problem. A growing number of patients are choosing to have surgery in outpatient settings. The number of outpatient surgery visits in the United States is reaching over 40 million a year. These surgeries include cosmetic, gynecological, urological and dental procedures, as well as common cardiac and orthopedic surgeries. Private insurers currently are encouraging outpatient surgery through higher reimbursement rates to physicians that perform in these settings. As public policy makers I encourage you to step back and review this relatively new health insurance protocol. While the convenience of outpatient surgical centers is a boon to health care, the economic channeling of patients to such health care facilities by insurers is not without risk. Minorities and older patients with multiple medical problems are more likely to require post operative emergency care and most free-standing outpatient centers have no emergency room or quick access to trauma care. Additionally, as trained anesthesiologists, we are concerned the provision of deep sedation in some medical procedures, outside a hospital setting, potentially compromises the health of patients if complications such as bleeding, allergic reactions to anesthesia and heart irregularities occur. We need to rethink the consequences of site of service reimbursement rates as they impact the safe delivery of medical services. I urge you to support Proposed Senate Bill 74.